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ORGANIZATIONAL CLIMATE IN THE MORE EFFECTIVE SCHOOLS.
RESEARCH REPORT.

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THIS REPORT PRESENTS THE FINDINGS OF A STUDY WHICH ASSESSED THE ORGANIZATIONAL CLIMATE OF THE 21 MORE EFFECTIVE SCHOOLS (MES) IN NEW YORK CITY. THE FINDINGS WERE GATHERED FOR THE INFORMATION OF MES BUILDING PRINCIPALS. AN ORGANIZATIONAL CLIMATE INDEX (OCI) WAS DISTRIBUTED TO MES TEACHERS, AND RESPONSES FROM 14 OF THE SCHOOLS WERE ANALYZED. WHEN OCI SCALE, FACTOR, AND AREA MEANS AND SIGMA WERE COMPUTED AND ANALYZED FOR EACH OF THESE SCHOOLS, DIFFERENCES IN THE PERCEPTION OF THE ENVIRONMENT IN THE SCHOOLS WERE FOUND TO EXIST. THESE DIFFERENCES, AND THE COMPLEX CORRELATIONS BETWEEN CLIMATE, PUPIL ETHNICITY, AND STUDENT/TEACHER PERSONNEL VARIABLES, ARE REPORTED. IT IS CONCLUDED THAT SCHOOL REORGANIZATION AND INCREASED STAFF MAY NOT BE EFFECTIVE WAYS TO RAISE ACHIEVEMENT LEVELS. RATHER, LONGER-TERM EFFORTS TO CREATE CERTAIN FUNDAMENTAL PSYCHOLOGICAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL CONDITIONS MAY BE NECESSARY TO BRING ABOUT ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT GAINS. THIS PAPER WAS PRESENTED AT ERANYS, ALBANY, NEW YORK, NOVEMBER 15, 1967. (DK)

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RESEARCH REPORT

67-15 (ABSTRACT)

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ORGANIZATIONAL CLIMATE IN THE MORE EFFECTIVE SCHOOLS

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Introduction

The study described in this report was carried out in 1966-67 as a part of the Institute for Principals of the More Effective Schools held at Brooklyn College under a grant from the Division of Teacher Education and Certification of the New York State Department of Education. Twenty-one elementary schools, located in the five boroughs of the city, had been designated to participate in the "More Effective Schools" project by the Board of Education of the City of New York. This was, essentially, an experimental reorganization and enrichment project intended to render the schools more effective in meeting the educational needs of socially-mixed pupil enrollments. Eschewing the conventional lectures and discussions generally employed in an in-service program, the strategy of this Institute was based on a data-feedback model. A conference entitled, "Leadership in Urban Schools," held at Brooklyn College in March, 1966, had generated interest in the concept of organizational climate among the "MES" principals. It seemed appropriate, therefore, to help principals get a clearer picture of the organizational climate in their schools and some deeper understanding of its significance. This study was an attempt to get that picture.

Organizational Climate

Organizational climate has been described as the "personality" of an organization. Information about the personality of an individual is obtained by observing his behavior or by asking him to describe his preference for different kinds of activities, utilizing some theoretical schema to organize his self-characterization. Similarly, we may obtain data concerning the characteristics of an organization and the behavior of people in it from the systematic reports of an observer, or we may analyze the consensual responses of individuals working in the organization to questions dealing with its policies, procedures, and activities. Again, one utilizes a theoretical framework to aid the interpretation of findings.

The Organizational Climate Index, utilized in the present study, was designed to describe the environmental press of an organization utilizing the needs-press constructs postulated by H. A. Murray and refined by George G. Stern and his associates. Scale and factor definitions are listed in Appendix A.

Procedures

The Organizational Climate Index was distributed to the teachers of the twenty-one More Effective Schools by their building principals. Those teachers who elected to participate in the study received a copy of the OCI and a detailed set of instructions. The respondents did not have to identify themselves by name and were assured that individual schools would likewise remain anonymous. Completed questionnaires were mailed in stamped, pre-addressed envelopes to the investigators at Brooklyn College.

A total of 219 teachers completed the OCI as directed. Of the twenty-one schools in the sample, 14 provided a ten per cent or greater response of completed questionnaire by the faculty; that percentage having been established as the minimum cut-off point that was acceptable for analysis. Interpretation of these data, therefore, must take into account the representativeness of the subgroups completing the questionnaire.

Findings

Organizational Climate Index scale, factor, and area means and sigma were computed for each school. These means were translated into standard scores, using norms provided by the Psychological Research Center at Syracuse University. Scale, factor, and area means and sigmas were subjected to a one-way analysis of variance. Standard score values and F-ratios are summarized in Tables I and II.

It can be seen that there are significant, systematic differences in perceived climate, or environmental press, which tend to set these schools apart from one another. These differences become apparent when each school is located as a point on the Development Press-Control Press Axis (see Figure 1). The schools which manifest the highest and lowest development press, schools 4, 8, 5, and 17, are depicted in terms of their factor scores in Figure 2.

The complex relationships between climate, pupil ethnicity, and student/teacher personnel variables are illustrated in Tables III and IV.

Schools whose faculties perceived a high development press (factors 1 through 5) appear to have high concentrations of Puerto Rican and Other students; schools with high percentages of Negro students are significantly associated with teacher perceptions of high levels of Impulse Control (factor 6). Perceived Orderliness is negatively correlated with per cent teacher absence and with teacher register. Practicalness is significantly correlated with per cent Other, negatively correlated with per cent Negro, and positively correlated with per cent pupil absence and pupil achievement.

High correlation between per cent pupil absence and Practicalness is curious, considering the relationship between this latter variable and pupil achievement. It would be interesting to determine which students have high absence rates in the schools having the highest index of achievement. Since the range of per cent absence among the fourteen schools in this sample is quite small, it is possible for a small number of schools with a large percentage of high-achieving Other students to account for this relationship. More investigations are in order to substantiate these preliminary findings.

In addition to the relationship indicated above, it can be seen that pupil achievement is also significantly related to high Other student population, low Puerto Rican student population, a high index of regular teachers, and a low rate of teacher turnover. Pupil absence shows a significant negative correlation with both index of regular teachers and teacher turnover. Pupil register is significantly correlated with per cent teacher absence. As one might expect, the number of pupils registered in a school is highly correlated with the size of the staff assigned to it.

Teacher turnover shows a significant negative correlation with index of regular teachers, and per cent teacher absence is highly correlated with teacher register and negatively correlated with per cent Other student population.

Discussion

The analysis has indicated the range of difference which exists among 14 of the 21 More Effective Schools on several dimensions of organizational climate. We have also indicated the relationship of these dimensions to specific student/teacher personnel variables, and additionally have shown the interrelationship of these variables with each other.

It is clear that when one discusses the "climate" of an elementary school one must take into account <u>all</u> of the factors which affect the manifest behavior of the members of the organization. The dynamic interpersonal transactions between and among administrators, teachers, and pupils is differentially influenced by at least these factors: the ethnic and socio-cultural setting of the school; the orientation, experience and competence of the professional staff; the size of the building unit; and the capacity of the building administrators to take effective initiative under high load and stress conditions.

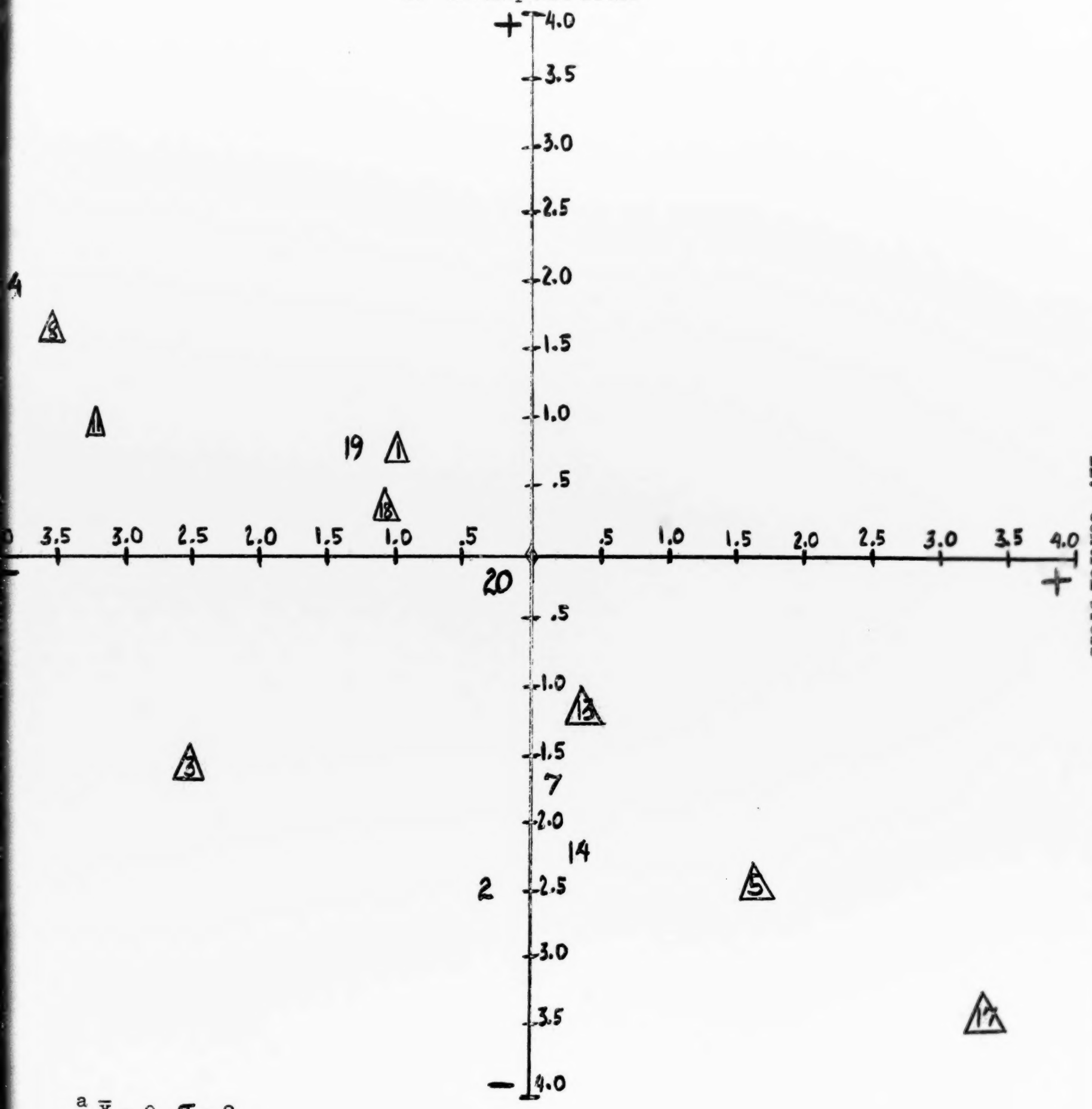
Development then becomes the key construct in the establishment of programs designed to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of schools for the disadvantaged. By "development" we mean the recognition that complex symbiotic relationships exist within an organization, that these relationships have a dynamic nature--that is, they interact and change over time--and that they must first be specified to a reasonable degree before any program of "intervention" is planned and initiated. It appears that some minimal level of development is necessary as a prior condition before change-oriented interventions can be reasonably expected to pay off in a positive way.

To continue to apply the same formula for improvement indiscriminately to a large sample of schools is to ignore the insights provided by this preliminary survey. "Here and now" behavior in an organization may best be viewed in the perspective of the development of dynamic interrelationships between individuals, and between individuals and their environment over a period of time. The assessment of organizational development gives at least a "time-slice" view of the present. This implies that intervention priorities must be established according to the present level of organizational development of a given school.

The question of the process of organizational development is one that cannot be answered without further study. The data indicate that there may be some relatively fixed relationships between the developmental organizational structure of a school and faculty/pupil quality-product factors. It would seem that further multivariant studies along these lines would be in order.

New York City's More Effective Schools have been the subject of considerable debate; much of that debate has had to do with whether or not the 21 schcols involved are actually more effective than their conventional counterparts. This study seems to cast some doubt on the efficacy of attempting to boost pupil achievement, as it is conventionally measured on achievement tests, by the relatively simplistic and expensive method of reorganizing schools and increasing their staffing. Rather, it would appear reasonable to suggest that longer-term attempts to affect the development aspects of organizational life might set the stage for more basic and significant changes to follow. It may well be that creating psychological and environmental conditions in the school organization designed to foster more adequate and meaningful climate is a prior condition to the attainment of the more readily visible end-product so eagerly sought in urban schools: higher pupil achievement.

FIGURE 1: DISTRIBUTION OF 14 M.E.S. SCHOOLS ON DEVELOPMENT-CONTROL AXES[a]



[a] $\bar{X} = 0$, $\sigma = 2$

Key: △ = school in operation only one year.

FIGURE 2: O.C.I. FACTOR PROFILES OF FOUR ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

OCI Factor Standard Scores
($\bar{X} = 0$, $\sigma = 2$)

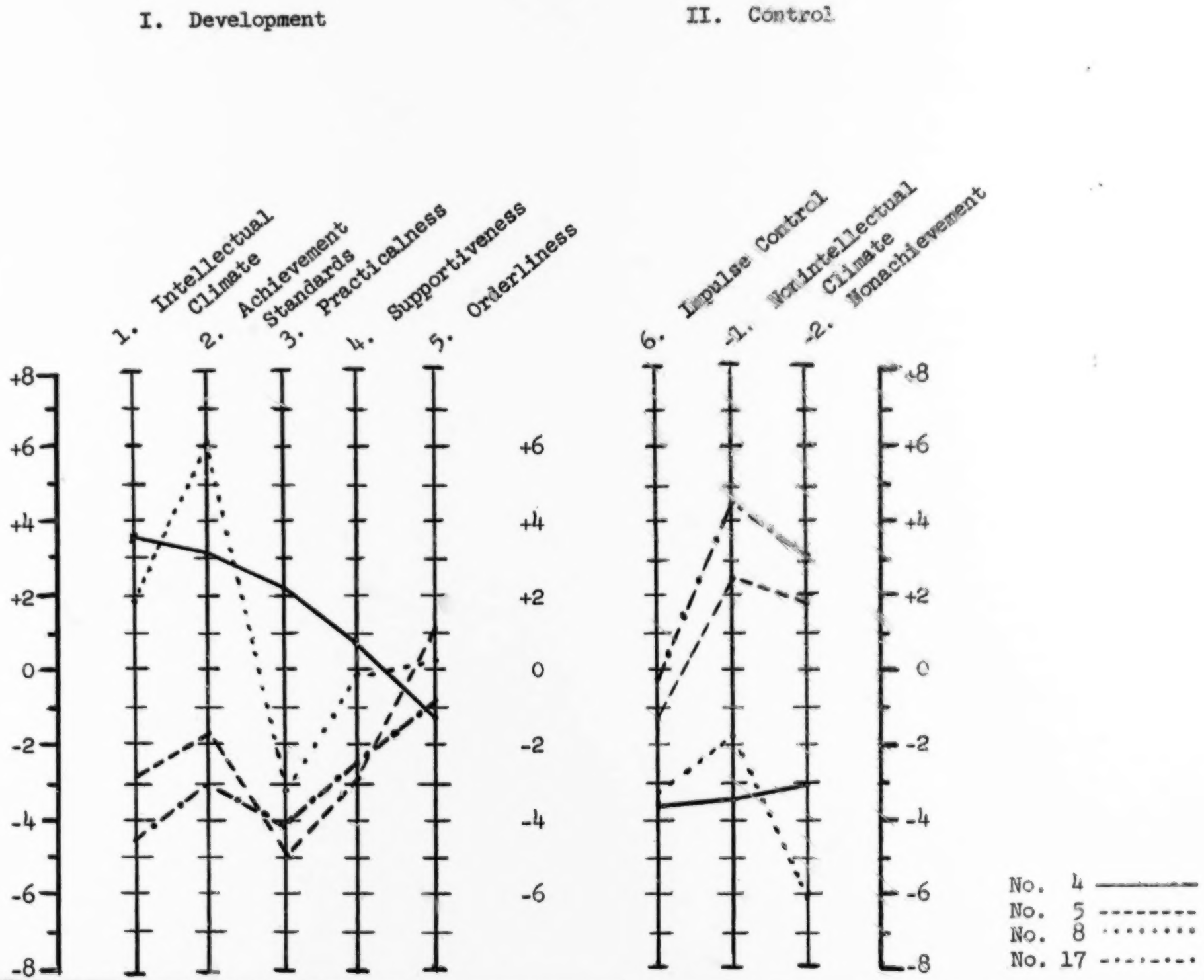


TABLE I

OCI Scale Score Differences Between Fourteen M.E.S. Elementary Schools (219 Teachers)

Standard Scores Means[a]

Scale	1	2	3	4	5	7	8	11	13	14	17	18	19	20	F[b]
1	-1.54	1.02	3.68	-2.67	.81	- .93	-2.99	1.17	1.40	1 05	1.59	.26	.81	-2.00	1.37
2	- .68	-4.79	-3.13	- .84	- .19	1 12	3.10	.45	-3.26	-2.38	-3.62	-1.29	.20	- .60	2.32**
3	4.46	- .58	- .08	1.75	2.45	- .08	2.33	1.61	2.56	1.61	-1.56	2.21	2.83	1.74	1.49
4	3.99	.21	- .38	2.78	-2.37	-2.37	2.12	4.14	.62	-1.91	-1.81	2.21	1.70	1.25	1.82*
5	-1.16	5.39	3.15	3.08	5.30	2.17	2.45	2.95	4.12	4.94	2.51	1.98	1.82	2.09	2.04*
6	5.67	1.84	2.27	3.05	3.43	3.31	4.71	1.95	- .74	.54	-2.20	3.59	2.39	.10	3.80**
7	.84	-1.30	-4.27	.40	1.61	-1.66	.09	.80	1.68	-1.08	-2.00	- .88	1.09	- .76	2.53**
8	2.89	.12	2.26	3.18	-1.50	4.18	6.16	3.75	1.00	1.12	-2.00	.92	1.79	.61	1.65
9	-1.06	-4.09	-1.51	-1.66	-1.06	-3.01	-2.02	- .82	- .55	- .55	.21	.46	.84	.13	2.05*
10	-1.08	1.23	3.35	- .90	2.04	-1.59	- .63	1.03	3.22	3.61	.87	- .44	1.86	.32	.95
11	1.48	.31	5.05	7.85	-8.56	- .14	5.79	4.99	.03	.36	- .95	1.77	2.14	- .82	2.27**
12	.33	1.38	2.45	.87	1.70	.54	2.63	.97	1.08	1.28	- .41	2.38	1.96	1.42	.30
13	- .98	-3.77	.44	1.54	- .21	2.70	4.78	.81	-1.31	.06	3.44	-1.04	-1.08	.31	2.41**
14	2.79	1.15	.99	4.70	.27	- .33	.27	3.80	.63	- .03	-2.06	1.27	- .23	.52	2.96**
15	3.59	.30	2.15	1.80	-3.01	- .68	2.71	1.33	.03	- .51	-3.07	.89	- .13	.53	1.58
16	.54	-1.08	-4.29	-1.16	- .78	-1.36	-1.53	-1.50	-1.22	-3.35	-1.44	.36	- .57	1.91	1.42
17	-2.71	-3.55	- .50	3.84	-2.19	-4.15	-1.59	.53	-2.24	-1.67	-3.98	1.54	1.11	- 37	2.22**
18	2.12	3.98	-1.11	.52	.18	.35	1.29	- .09	2.12	-4.24	-2.34	.09	-1.87	- 06	1.96*
19	2.12	- .91	1.33	-5.01	-2.48	2.32	-2.32	- .09	1.89	-2.67	1.64	1.47	3.05	- .21	1.75*

I

TABLE N CON'T

OCI Scale Score Differences Between Fourteen M. S. S. Elementary Schools (219 Teachers)

Standard Scores Means[a]

Scale	1	2	3	4	5	7	8	11	13	14	17	18	19	20	F[b]
20	-6.41	-5.09	-1.50	2.36	-3.51	-4.69	-4.30	-1.94	-3.39	-4.64	-3.58	-1.41	-1.20	- .15	2.07*
21	1.14	-2.88	-4.30	.08	-4.71	-2.11	- .13	- .58	-1.48	-4.05	-2.40	- .87	-2.00	- .88	1.04
22	.61	- .04	1.09	-2.79	3.04	-1.50	- .22	1 02	1.15	.95	1.34	- .51	1.25	-1.31	1.47
23	2.86	4.03	3.64	1.87	.83	-1.45	.39	5.19	4.36	-1.13	1.92	2.12	1.45	1.06	1.70
24	-2.97	-1.26	- .09	.43	-4.81	-4.81	1.19	1.24	2.54	-3.03	-2.58	.50	1.40	-1.61	1.22
25	-1.71	-1.63	2.13	2.93	-5.10	-3.64	.78	1.14	-5.16	.29	-3.35	- .72	- .93	- .45	1.80*
26	-4.47	-3.71	-1.73	-3.13	-4.11	-4.71	1.49	-2.53	-5.01	-3.29	-6.80	-2.66	-1.92	2.51	.84
27	- .06	- .36	-1.18	-1.39	1.26	.45	- .19	2.35	-2.95	-2.61	-2.34	- .65	.51	-1.13	2.44**
28	.20	.13	.72	.26	- .47	.26	.43	.75	.45	.21	.36	.34	.13	- .04	3.35**
29	.46	.04	- .27	.32	- .41	- .30	.14	.10	.18	- .18	- .12	.22	.11	.05	1.56
30	- .19	- .26	.17	.28	- .24	- .39	.07	.17	- .01	- .18	- .35	- .01	.22	.02	1.26

[a] $\bar{x} = 0 \quad \bar{\sigma} = 2$

[b] .01 = **

.05 = *

II

TABLE ~~III~~

OCI Factor And Area Score Differences Between Fourteen M.E.S. Elementary Schools (219 Teachers)

Standard Score Means [a]

Factor	1	2	3	4	5	7	8	11	13	14	17	18	19	20	F[b]
1	.46	-1.22	1.34	3.45	-2.61	-2.03	1.84	2.09	-2.47	-1.38	-4.42	.22	59	- .67	1.92*
2	.70	-2.05	1.63	3.03	-1.88	2.43	6.03	2.76	- .74	.09	-2.97	.60	1.89	.12	1.94*
3	-6.67	-4.85	-1.31	2.18	-4.95	-5.95	-3.18	-1.15	-1.84	-5.18	-4.10	-1.00	- .45	- .78	1.90*
4	1.12	-2.52	-3.92	.90	-2.80	-2.67	- .24	- .41	-1.32	-3.56	-2.45	- .24	- .55	- .04	1.57
5	1.63	-1.78	-2.12	-1.34	1.00	-2.02	.19	.01	1.38	- .90	- .82	.49	1.84	.13	2.05*
6	-2.06	-4.85	-3.69	-3.67	-1.38	- .99	-3.29	-4.80	-3.88	-1.02	- .51	-2.66	-1.05	-1.25	2.04*
Area															
I	.74	-2.44	-1.30	1.91	-2.36	-1.92	1.48	1.01	-1.30	-2.34	-3.47	.16	.75	- .25	1.50
II	-1.11	- .27	-2.39	-3.99	1.99	.20	-3.75	-3.48	.41	.45	3.21	-1.13	-1.19	- .04	1.92*

[a] $\bar{x} = 0$, $\sigma = 2$

[b] .01 = **
.05 = *

TABLE III

CORRELATION OF OCI FACTOR AND AREA VALUES WITH SELECTED STUDENT AND TEACHER PERSONNEL VARIABLES

N=14 schools

Factors	% P.R.	% Negro	% Others	Teacher Reg.	Index of Regulars	Teacher Abs.	Teacher Turnover	Pupil Reg.	Pupil Abs.	Pupil Ach.
Intellectual Climate	+.25	-.60*	+.43	+.12	+.07	+.12	-.22	+.15	-.14	+.38
Achievement Standards	+.39	-.30	+.03	+.28	-.20	+.29	-.23	+.26	-.26	+.22
Practicalness	+.24	-.63**	+.47*	-.10	+.31	+.13	-.09	+.08	+.52*	+.51*
Supportiveness	+.27	-.58*	+.40	-.22	-.22	-.02	-.07	-.21	+.05	+.27
Orderliness	+.20	-.28	+.14	-.67**	-.09	-.59*	+.22	-.33	-.28	+.08
Impulse Control	-.27	+.45	-.27	-.02	-.03	+.07	-.37	+.08	+.17	+.01
Areas										
Development Press	+.36	-.39	+.41	-.08	-.10	+.02	-.21	-.04	-.14	+.39
Impulse Control	-.27	+.56*	-.34	-.17	+.01	-.15	+.11	-.16	+.20	-.30

** = .01
* = .05

TABLE IV

INTERCORRELATION OF SELECTED STUDENT AND TEACHER PERSONNEL VARIABLES

N=14 schools

	% P.R.	% Negro	% Others	Teacher Reg.	Index of Regulars	Teacher Abs.	Teacher Turnover	Pupil Reg.	Pupil Abs.	Pupil Ach.
% P.R.	--	-.36	-.33	-.10	-.14	+.27	+.14	-.11	+.16	-.46*
% Negro		--	-.76**	+.38	-.15	+.29	+.31	+.36	-.23	-.36
% Others			--	-.32	+.24	-.48*	-.41	-.29	+.12	+.68**
Teacher Register				--	-.27	+.71**	-.09	+.93**	+.29	-.20
Index of Regulars					--	-.25	-.68**	-.18	-.92**	+.49*
Teacher Absence						--	-.01	+.73**	-.20	-.24
Teacher Turnover							--	+.08	-.48*	-.58*
Pupil Register								--	+.34	-.10
Pupil Absence									--	-.35
Pupil Achievement										--

** = .01
* = .05

APPENDIX A

SCALE AND FACTOR DEFINITIONS

Scale Definitions

1. Abasement - Assurance: self-depreciation versus self-confidence
2. Achievement: striving for success through personal effort
3. Adaptability - Defensiveness: acceptance of criticism versus resistance to suggestion
4. Affiliation - Rejection: friendliness versus unfriendliness
5. Aggression - Blame Avoidance: hostility versus disorganization
6. Change - Sameness: flexibility versus routine
7. Conjunctivity - Disjunctivity: planfulness versus disorganization
8. Counteraction - Inferiority Avoidance: restriving after failure versus withdrawal
9. Deference - Restiveness: respect for authority versus rebelliousness
10. Dominance - Tolerance: ascendance versus forbearance
11. Ego Achievement: striving for power through social action
12. Emotionality - Placidity: expressiveness versus restraint
13. Energy - Passivity: effort versus inertia
14. Exhibitionism - Inferiority Avoidance: attention seeking versus shyness
15. Fantasied Achievement: daydreams of extraordinary public recognition
16. Harm Avoidance - Risktaking: fearfulness versus thrill seeking
17. Humanities - Social Sciences: interests in the Humanities and the Social Sciences
18. Impulsiveness - Deliberation: impetuousness versus reflection
19. Narcissism: vanity
20. Nurturance - Rejection: helping others versus indifference
21. Objectivity - Projectivity: detachment versus superstition (AI) or suspicion (EI)
22. Order - Disorder: compulsive organization of details versus carelessness
23. Play - Work: pleasure seeking versus purposefulness
24. Practicalness - Impracticalness: interest in practical activities versus indifference
25. Reflectiveness: introspective contemplation
26. Science: interest in the Natural Sciences
27. Sensuality - Puritanism: interest in sensory and aesthetic experiences
28. Sexuality - Prudishness: heterosexual interests versus their inhibition
29. Supplication - Autonomy: dependency versus self-reliance
30. Understanding: intellectuality

A factor analysis of these scales has indicated that there are six first order factors, the first five of which combine to form a second order factor called Development Press. The reflection of factors one and two combined with factor six form the second order factor described as Control Press. First order factors and their definitions are listed below.[1]

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[1] George G. Stern, People in context: the measurement of environmental interaction in school and society. Unpublished manuscript, 1967.

Factor Definitions

I. Development Press

1. Intellectual Climate. This factor describes a concern with intellectual activity, social action, and personal effectiveness. It is based on the scales for Humanities - Social Science, Science, Reflectiveness, Understanding, Fantasied Achievement, Sensuality, Ego Achievement, Exhibitionism, and Change.

2. Achievement Standards. This factor reflects a press for achievement. Schools high on this factor stress hard work, perseverance, and a total day-by-day commitment to institutional purposes. It is defined by Counteraction, Energy, Achievement, Emotionality, and Ego Achievement.

3. Practicalness. This factor suggests an environmental dimension of practicality tempered with friendliness. It is defined by Practicalness and Nurturance.

4. Supportiveness. This factor deals with aspects of the organizational environment that respect the integrity of the teacher as a person, but with the implication of dependency needs to be supported rather than of personal autonomy. It might be considered a measure of democratic paternalism. The scales defining it are: Assurance, Tolerance, Objectivity, Affiliation, Conjunctivity, Supplication, Blame Avoidance, Harm Avoidance, and Nurturance.

5. Orderliness. The components of this factor are concerned with the press for organizational structure, procedure, orderliness, and a respect for authority. Conformity to community pressures and an effort to maintain a proper institutional image are probably also concomitants of a high score on this factor. It is based on Order, Narcissism, Adaptability, Conjunctivity, Deference, and Harm Avoidance.

II. Control Press

6. Impulse Control. This factor implies a high level of constraint and organizational restrictiveness. There is little opportunity for personal expression or for any form of impulsive behavior. It is based on Work, Prudishness, Blame Avoidance, Deliberation, Placidity, and Inferiority Avoidance.